

GUDRUN BÜHNEMANN, *Forms of Gaṇeśa, A Study based on the Vidyārṇavatantra*, Institut für Indologie, Wichtrach 1989, pp. 154.

The book by Gudrun Bühnemann, the well known author of a rich study about *smārta* ritual (*Pūjā, A Study in Smārta Ritual*, Wien 1988), consists mainly in the analysis of fourteen different forms of Gaṇeśa (from Ekākṣara-Gaṇapati to Ucchiṣṭa-Gaṇapati) to be found in the *Vidyārṇavatantra*, a large compilation of *mantraśāstra* attributed to Vidyāraṇya Yati. The book is enriched with a series of plates (black and white), an essential bibliography and a number of indexes (A. Names of Deities and Seers – B. Sanskrit Terms and *bīja*-s – C. Attributes and Colours – D. Materials, Rites, and Results – E. General Index). The analysis of the *Vidyārṇavatantra* as a mainly iconographical source is deepened by the confrontation with museum findings from North India (Mathurā, Gwālior, Khajurāho) and with archive findings from South India (Institut français d'Indologie, Pondicherry). Strangely enough, Paul B. Courtright's *Gaṇeśa, Lord of Obstacles, Lord of Beginnings* (Oxford University Press, Delhi 1985, pp. XIV/274) is not to be found in the bibliography. I may agree that it was not a masterpiece, but the great methodological debate that Courtright's book stirred up makes this absence a somewhat suspect one. Maybe it has been a sort of politically correct shame, due to the negative feeling that Courtright's book caused within some fundamentalist *hindū* spheres? I cannot believe that Bühnemann could deserve

such a suspicion. Maybe it has been only a slip of the memory. Bühnemann's booklet is rich with tables, schedules, textual references and literal quotations, a real mine of informations for anyone who intends to deepen in a systematical way the study of the iconography of the deity with an elephant's head. Particularly useful are the quotations of the texts of the different *mantra*-s in honour of Gaṇeśa, accompanied by a plain translation. The main textual source is the *Vidyārṇavatantra*, supplemented by other tantric and iconographical sources, such as the *Śrītattvanidhi*, the *Ajitāgama*, the *Mūrtidhyāna*, the *Dhyānaratnāvalī*, the *Devatādhyānaśloka*-s, the *Kriyākramadyoti*, the *Devatāmūrtiprakaraṇa*, the *Rūpamaṇḍana*, the *Śilparatna*, the *Sārasaṃgraha*; and by some epigraphical sources (Minākṣi-Sundareśvara Temple, Madurai; Manakkulavināyaka Temple, Pondicherry). In particular the identity of the *Sārasaṃgraha*, quoted in the *Vidyārṇavatantra*, is not at all clear: it is not identical neither with the *Prapañcasārasaṃgraha* by Girvaṇendra Sarasvatī, nor with Saubhāgyasiddha Nityānanda's commentary *Sārasaṃgraha* on the *Prapañcasāra*, nor with Ānandatīrthabhaṅgavatpādācārya's *Tantrasārasaṃgraha*, nor with the *Sakalāgamasārasaṃgraha*. The book on Gaṇeśa by Gudrun Bühnemann is a very useful source for scholars intending to trace the origin of a plenty of iconographical details and a real inventory of *mantra*-s centred around this particular deity, much loved both in past and present day India.

Alberto Pelissero

MARZENNA CZERNIAK-DROZDZOWICZ, *Pāñcarātra Scripture in the Process of Change/A Study of the Paramasaṃhitā*, Publications of the De Nobili Research Library, Vol. XXXI, Vienna 2003.

This study about the *Paramasaṃhitā* (ParS) is the last volume published within a research project, coordinated by Prof. Gerhard Oberhammer, concerning the textual sources of the *Pāñcarātra* tradition. In the first chapter of her work, concerning the text and its structure, Czerniak-Drozdowicz argues that the *Paramasaṃhitā*, though not being among the oldest *Pāñcarātra Saṃhitā*-s, was certainly com-

posed, probably in South India, before 1000 AD. Further on the author provides a critical analysis of the contents of each chapter of the ParS. The evaluation of the arrangement of the various topics within the text leads her to the conclusion that one can distinguish two different layers within the ParS: 1) an older, original ritual corpus, expression of a tantric way of thinking and 2) a later imposed structure, characterized by a more orthodox, brahmanical and devotional attitude. The extant text is thus the result of a complex process of adaptation in which the original corpus was re-worked under the impact of a *bhakti*-featured mentality. Czerniak-Drozdowicz underscores that such intertextual processes of change, which characterize the ParS as well as other texts of the *Pāñcarātra* tradition, are not limited to a single tradition: in fact, as A. Sanderson has demonstrated, it is possible to trace text-flows in both directions between the *Śaiva* and the *Pāñcarātra* scriptures.

The second part of the study deals with an analysis of the theological and philosophical ideas of the ParS. The topics discussed are: the doctrine of God, regarding the forms of the Lord and His functions of creating the world and granting grace to His devotees; the doctrine of the individual soul, concerning its nature, destiny within *samsāra* and ways of salvation. In the latter context the author deals extensively with the *dīkṣā* ceremony, the practice of *dhyāna* and, in general, *yoga*, as they are envisaged by the ParS, and points out the text's emphasis on the role of *bhakti* for the attainment of liberation.

The third and last part of the study concerns the analysis of the ritual teachings of the ParS, particularly of the so-called *vidhir aṣṭadhā*, the eightfold division of the daily religious obligations of the devotee. In this respect Czerniak-Drozdowicz proposes that the re-worker of the ParS adopted this scheme of the eight duties, which are intended for all members of the vaiṣṇava community, instead of the *pañcakālavidhi*, taught in other *pāñcarātra* works and generally observed only by the initiated, in order to subsume the tantric Vaiṣṇavism featuring the original corpus of the ParS within the mainstream of the Vaiṣṇava brahmanical orthodoxy.

*Silvia Schwarz Linder*

*Essays in Jaina Philosophy and Religion*, ed. by Piotr Balcerowicz, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Delhi, 2003.

The book is a collection of valuable papers - written by some of the most prominent scholars in the field of Jaina studies - which represents a very important contribution to the study and understanding of Jaina philosophical, historical, religious, literary and social aspects, as it sheds a light on a range of topics and points the exploration of which results in a significant progress of Indology as a whole.

The book pays particular attention to the Jaina philosophy – with special reference to the concept of *Anekānta*; to the historical development of Jainism – considered in its relations with Buddhism and the *Ājīvika*-s; to the Jaina concept and ideal of ethics, as well as of social and monastic life; and finally to the Medieval development of the Jaina system. These four research areas of the book correspond to the four sections in which it is divided. The first section – entitled “Philosophy and *Anekānta*” – comprises contributes by Albrecht Wezler, who writes on *Studien zum Dvādaśāra-naya-cakra des Śvetāmbara Mallavādin. II: The Twelve Aras of the Dvādaśāra-naya-cakra and their Relation to the Canon as Seen by Mallavādin. First Part*; by Jaayandra Soni, whose paper is entitled *Kundakunda and Umāsvāti on Anekānta-vāda*; by Piotr Balcerowicz, who proposes *Some Remarks on the Naya Method*; by Christoph Emmrich, with an essay entitled *How Many Times? Pluralism, Dualism or Monism in Early Jaina Temporal Description*; and by Kristi L. Wiley, who works on *Extrasensory Perception and Knowledge in Jainism*. The second section – entitled “Early Jainism, Buddhism and *Ājīvikism*” – includes essays by Muni Jambuvijaya, who presents the *Essence and Outline of Jainism*; by Padmanabh S. Jaini, who writes on *Cātuyāma-saṃvara in the Pāli Canon*; by Kenji Watanabe, who proposes a *Comparative Study of Passages from Early Buddhist and Jaina Texts: Āyār 2.15: Dhṛp 183 and Isioh 29.19: Dhṛp 360, 361*; and by Johannes Bronkhorst, relating on *Ājīvika Doctrine Reconsidered*. The third section – the title of which is “Ethics and Monastic Disciple” – consists of a paper by Phyllis Granoff, entitled *Paradigms of Protection in Early Indian Religious Texts or an Essay on What to Do with Your Demons*; of an essay by Adelheid Mette on *Waste Disposal (pariṭṭihavaṇa-vihi) in*

*Ancient India. Some Regulations for Protection of Life from the Rules of the Order of Jain Monks*; and of a contribution by Luitgard Soni on *Concealing and Protecting. Stories on Upagūhana*. Finally, the fourth section – which is entitled “Mediaeval Mysticism and Sectarian Divisions” – comprises contributions by Colette Caillat, who sketches a *Portraiture of the Yogi (joi) as Sketched by Joindu*; by Nalini Balbir, whose paper is entitled *Samayasundara’s Sāmācārī-śataka and Jaina Sectarian Divisions in the Seventeenth Century*; and by John E. Cort, who writes on *Dyānatrāy: An Eighteenth Century Digambara Mystical Poet*.

Some of the papers (those by Balbir, Caillat, Emmrich, J. Soni, L. Soni, Watanabe and Wezler) were presented by the authors at the International Seminar “Aspects of Jainism”, held at Warsaw University, Poland, 8-9 September 2000, organized by Professor Marek Mejer and Piotr Balcerowicz. On that occasion Muni Jambuvijaya was the honorary president, while Professor Albrecht Wezler was the advisor and consultant.

In the end, it is worth noting that one can appreciate the book not only for the novelty and depth of the points it explores – developed by world-acclaimed scholars in Jaina studies, and for the great contribution it gives to Indology, but also for its exposition, which runs fluently and is quite clear and limpid.

Mimma Congedo

RANIERO GNOLI (ed. by), *La rivelazione del Buddha. I testi antichi*. Mondadori, Milano, 2001; *La rivelazione del Buddha. Il grande veicolo*, Mondadori, Milano, 2004.

The two volumes represent a fundamental contribution for the Italian readers and scholars, as they provide a very refined and sophisticated translation – which finds a perfect balance between the need of adherence to the original text and the need of making that text accessible and pleasant to a modern reader – of several major Buddhist texts.

The first volume collects several texts from the Pāli Canon of the *Therāvadin*-s – one of the most ancient and important sources for all the

Buddhist traditions – and from the Buddhist literature on the Buddha’s life – like Aśvaghōṣa’s *Buddhacarita*. The texts collected are presented and divided according to the three main directions which characterize the Buddhist spiritual path: *sīla* (ethics), *samādhi* (concentration or contemplation) and *paññā* (wisdom), which must be considered as interdependent realities; this consideration also helps to shed a light on the meaning of the texts themselves. An integral translation is provided for the following texts: the *Udāna*, the *Itivuttaka*, the *Dhammapada*, and the *Śālistambasūtra*; with regard to the other texts and collections, the books offers a selection of the most important passages. The explanatory notes to the texts frequently take advantage of the commentaries (*Aṭṭhakathā*) and sub-commentaries (*Ṭīkā*), which often represent an original interpretation of the scriptural source they are devoted to, and help shedding a light upon the development and history of Buddhism as a whole. The texts comprised in the volume are translated and commented by Claudio Cicuzza, Raniero Gnoli and Francesco Sferra.

The second volume, divided into eight sections, includes translations – mainly from Sanskrit – of Buddhist texts belonging to the Great Vehicle. The eight sections are: “La Perfezione della saggezza”, “I grandi *sūtra*”, “Il Cammino di mezzo”, “Lo Yogācāra”, “La scuola logico-epistemologica buddhista”, “La Terra pura”, “Tra India, Cina e Tibet: il buddhismo iranico di Khotan”, “Il Veicolo del diamante”. Such a division into sections does not correspond to a chronological evolution, but rather presents a thematic path. The texts here included are quite often translated for the first time into a modern language or into Italian. Like in the first volume, the translation finds a balance between the adherence to the original text and the necessity to make that text suitable for a modern reader; also, the collection constantly refers to the Sanskrit and Tibetan commentaries and sub-commentaries as well as to the manuscripts. Furthermore, sometimes the editors also take advantage of the commentaries proposed by contemporary teachers, like the Dalai Lama, which can provide new interpretative tools. The texts comprised in the volume are translated and commented by Claudio Cicuzza, Alfonsa Ferrari, Raniero Gnoli, Mauro Maggi, Cristina Pecchia, Corrado Pensa, Margherita Serena Saccone, Francesco Sferra and Attilia Sironi.

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